



Kanto Kids Corner

Advocate for Your Child with Special Needs

Many parents of children with special needs report feeling overwhelmed and/or intimidated at times by the school personnel and medical professionals involved with their children. Following are some tips, written by a parent of a child challenged with disabilities, to help you become your child's strongest supporter and best advocate:

- Believe in yourself and your abilities—remind yourself that you are important and have a right to be involved in your child's decisions.
- Deal with your perceptions or feelings about yourself as a parent of a child with special needs. Don't let feelings of anger or denial get in the way of your ability to advocate and negotiate.
- Arrive prepared for all meetings with doctors, school personnel, etc. Note ahead of time the important points you want to make and take the list with you. Ask trusted relatives and friends for their input and to go with you if you'd like.
- Learn to communicate assertively, rather than passively or aggressively. An assertive person clearly and positively states his/her point of view and also listens to what others have to say.
- Share your dreams and your vision for your child. Talk about your child's strengths, interests, abilities,

needs, and what things you would like your child to do better.

- If you don't understand something, don't be afraid to ask for an explanation.
- If you don't agree with something, speak up and say so. Give facts to support your point of view, or just say it's because you have a gut feeling. At least you will get it off your chest. But remember, no one else knows your child better than you do.
- Be willing to learn from others. Strive to remain open-minded and focus on problem-solving.
- Learn and understand your rights as a parent of a student with special needs.
- The ultimate responsibility for your child's growth and education is in your hands. Reach out to professionals who can help you but don't give your responsibility over to them. You are the constant in your child's life and you will need to manage and coordinate the services he/she needs as professional people come and go.

For more information, please visit:

<http://www.bellaonline.com/articles/art6156.asp>

<http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content5/rights.child.w.dis.html>

EDIS: Who We Are and What We Do

At Educational and Developmental Intervention Services, or EDIS, we work with children with disabilities, their parents, other health care professionals and school personnel to maximize the kids' academic achievement.

Arnn Elementary School houses our

main offices, on Sagamihara DHA, and our satellite offices can be found at Shirley-Lanham Elementary on NAF Atsugi as well as at Zama High School.

Our local staff includes a clinical psychologist, a speech/language patholo-

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gist (SLP), a clinical social worker, an early childhood special educator (ECSE), physical and occupational therapists and an office manager. Our SLP and ECSE work exclusively with children from birth to 36 months in the Early Intervention Program. Current staff members are:

Psychologist/Division Officer: LCDR Margaret Swank
Physical Therapist: LCDR Sean Easley
Occupational Therapist: LT Eric Harmon
SLP: Trish Overly
Clinical Social Worker: Gordon Lyons
ECSE: Michelle Reese
Office Manager: Colleen Nogoy
(Picture not available.)

Brief description of services provided by each:

Clinical Psychologist—provides psychological testing, evaluation, diagnosis & treatment of children with emotional, behavioral, developmental and/or social system concerns.

Physical Therapist—provides consultative services, screening, evaluation and treatment of patients 0-21 years old with developmental and/or gross motor delays.

Occupational Therapist—provides consultative services, screening, evaluation and treatment of children of all ages with developmental, fine motor, and/or visual delays.

SLP—provides screening, evaluation & treatment to children 0-36 months with speech & language-processing delays.

Clinical Social Worker—provides mental health evaluation, diagnosis and treatment of children with emotional, behavioral, developmental and/or social system concerns.

ECSE—provides comprehensive consultative services, screening, evaluation and treatment of children 0-36 months with developmental delays.

Office Manager—serves as initial point-of-contact for referred children and families. Facilitates visiting provider scheduling and coordinates essential administrative functions.



LCDR Swank



LCDR Easley



LT Harmon



Trish Overly



Gordon Lyons



Michelle Reese

PHYSICAL THERAPY TIP

To fully enjoy a season of sports, kids need to properly condition themselves. Performing activities such as bicycling or raking leaves helps kids to get their muscles limber before donning a team uniform. Good warm-up and cool-down sessions also help growing muscles avoid injury and strain.

Sometimes, however, injuries do occur. Parents should remember that children are not small adults and are more susceptible to injury. No matter how small the sports injury, children should be checked out thoroughly by a physical therapist or physician. For more info, check out: http://www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content2/news2/schoolspirit9_3_96.html

SCHOOL TIP

Most schools give their students a planner in which to organize homework and assignments. Get to know your kid's planner. Help them stay on top of homework assignments so they don't fall behind. The planner also provides a great way for you to communicate with your child's teacher!

Questions? Concerns? Comments? PLEASE email us at bhcatsugi-edis@nhyoko.med.navy.mil and we'll include the question and response in future newsletters (or we'll respond privately if you'd like—just indicate your preference.)

HELPFUL NUMBERS

Army:

Army Community Service	263-4357
John O. Arnn Elementary School	267-6602
Behavioral Health Services	263-4610
Camp Zama CDC	263-4992
Community Health Nurse	263-5050
Exceptional Family Member Program	263-4782
Family Advocacy/New Parent Support Program	263-4782
MEDDAC Clinic (Appointment Line)	263-4175
Sagamihara CDC	267-6564
School Age Services	267-6013
WIC Overseas	263-8960
Zama American High School	263-3181

Navy:

Atsugi CDC	264-3524
Atsugi Youth Center	264-3878
Branch Health Clinic Atsugi (Appointment Line)	264-3958
Exceptional Family Member Program	264-3953
Family Advocacy Program	264-4188
Fleet and Family Support Center	264-3628
Kamiseya CDC	265-8714
New Parent Support Program	264-4178
Shirley Lanham Elementary School	264-3664